DEMOCRATIC
GERMAN REPORT

VOL. IV NO. 7 APRIL 1st 1955 Price: 15 Pf., 5 c., 3 d

CONCENTRATION CAMPS AGAIN!

Concentration Camp Gross Hesepe in West Germany.
This is not a picture taken in 1935 under Hitler, but in 1955 under Adenauer

The new concentration camp has been built in the peat-bogs on the river Ems, about ten miles from the Dutch frontier. It is about fifteen miles south of the site of the notorious nazi concentration camp of Boergermoor, in which the SS guards murdered many thousands of anti-nazis during the Hitler period.

In the new concentration camp, as in Hitler's camp, the prisoners, including many young West Germans who have been sent to the camp for their opposition to the new Wehrmacht, have to slave in the bogs, often up to their knees in mud, and constantly threatened by armed guards.

More details of the new concentration camp inside.

6000 YOUNG WEHRMACHT RESISTERS JAILED IN WEST GERMANY

Between 1950 and 1954 a total of 6429 young people were sent to prison in West Germany because of their stand against remilitarisation and for German unity, official statistics published in Berlin on March 15th show.

The sentences ranged from a few weeks up to five years. In addition, police investigations were started in the same five-year period against 35,189 other young people, and many of them were held for weeks or months by the police without their cases coming to trial. A large proportion of those not imprisoned lost their jobs as a result of the constant police interrogation.

The "crimes" for which these young people were sent to prison included the following:

1. "Membership of a secret society." The "secret society" is the Free German Youth, progressive youth organisation which leads the fight against West German remilitarisation.

2. "Activities endangering the state." This includes the distribution of anti-militarist leaflets, or posting of placards. In Lueneburg a young man was sent to prison for posting a placard reading: "Not a man for remilitarisation, not a penny for arms, everything for peace."

3. "Incitement to insubordination." This "crime" includes all forms of propaganda against a new West German Wehrmacht.

4. "Insulting the Federal Chancellor." Young men and women have been imprisoned for stating in leaflets that Chancellor Adenauer is opposed to the reunification of Germany.

A very large number of young people have been held in prison for long periods while the cases against them were under preparation. Jupp Angenforth, the chairman of the West German Free Youth, has been held in prison "under investigation" for over two years, and has not yet been brought to trial. Adolf Graber, whose father was murdered by the nazis in Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, was arrested on June 5th 1953, and released on October 28th 1954, without ever having been charged with any offence.

Exact statistics are available of the cases conducted against young people in Lower Saxony between August 1st 1951 and October 31st 1954. During this period, in the West German province of Lower Saxony, which has a population less than the population of London, a total of 1055 cases of young people charged with "political" offenses such as the fight against remilitarisation were brought before the courts. They included the following:

227 cases of "membership of a secret society."

113 cases of "activities endangering the state."

20 cases of "high treason" or "preparation of high treason."

90 cases of "insulting the Federal Chancellor and Federal Government."

17 cases of "incitement to insubordination."

16 cases of "resisting the state power."

572 assorted cases such as "conducting illegal plebiscite", "collecting signatures", "membership of the Free German Youth", etc.

In a majority of the cases the accused had to be released when the case was finally brought to court, since there was not sufficient evidence to convict. Most of the accused had been held in prison for weeks or months awaiting trial, and nearly all lost their jobs as a result.

Socialist, Communist Journalists in Same Boat

Socialist and Communist journalists in West Germany are coming under increasingly serious pressure from the police and state prosecutors. Klaus Besser, editor of the Social Democratic newspaper "Neue Ruhr Zeitung" was formally charged on March 18th with "insulting Chancellor Adenauer" by writing that he wanted to use West German youth as cannon-fodder. He will be taken to court to answer the charge within the next few weeks.

On the same day the prosecuting attorney in Frankfurt/Main made the same charge against Ernst Finger, editor of the Communist newspaper "Sozialistische Volkszeitung" in Frankfurt.

During February Wilhelm Riepekohl, editor of the Social Democratic newspaper "Fraenkische Tagespost", was jailed for four months because he had published a report that the West German Government had given financial support to the BDJ (Federation of German Youth), a neo-fascist West German youth organisation.

Hitler Attorney in Bonn

In 1943 two Catholic students in Munich, Hans and Sophie Scholl, who had organised an anti-Hitler resistance group, were arrested by the Gestapo and executed.

Special State Attorney Roemer was responsible for arranging and rushing through the trial of the two young resistance fighters.

Today Herr Roemer, with the rank of ministerial director, heads the Department of Public Law in the West German Ministry of Justice in Bonn.

"Youth Oppose Conscription" – Bonn Official

Between 80 per cent and 90 per cent of the young people in West Germany are opposed to conscription for a new Wehrmacht, stated Ministerial Director Barth, head of the legal department of the West German War Office, on March 21st.

Herr Barth made this admission in the course of an address he gave to the High School for Politics in Frankfurt/Main.

SAME PATH AS 1933

One of the West German progressives sentenced to serve time at the new concentration camp (see opposite page) has been Herbert Bayer, a Communist official, who was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment by the West German Supreme Court for distributing the Communist Party's "Programme for the National Reunification of Germany."

When he was given the news that he would be sent to Gross Hesepe Concentration Camp, Beyer wrote to his wife:

"This just confirms what we stated at the trial: the path being taken is the same as in 1933. So now I am going to become one of the peat bog soldiers: thousands of the very best Germans were there before me."

Concentration Camp — 1955

Gross Hesepe Concentration Camp, West Germany

LETTER FROM THE CAMP

Here are extracts from a letter sent from the Gross Hesepe Concentration Camp by a young West German who had been sent there to serve a one-year sentence for his active opposition to the formation of a new West German Wehrmacht. For obvious reasons his name cannot be published:

"At Lingen Prison I was bundled into a police van with 15 criminals, and we were taken to the camp... The first thing which struck me there was the very high double barbed-wire fence, and the watch-towers.

"On the next day we were marched out into the bogs, watched by guards armed with U. S. repeating carbines. At midday we got a thin cabbage soup. When we complained the foreman said: 'Don't grumble so much. The Russians who used to be shut up here would have been happy if they had got as much as that.'

"Then he pointed to a birch-wood not far away and said: 'There are about 45,000 Russians lying buried there. They died in the camp (during the war, ed.), mostly from hunger-typhus.'

"In our work in the bogs we have to stand in water up to the knee. Anyone who gets sick is sent to the sick-bay and gets put on half rations. The sick bay is the dirtiest and most dilapidated of all the buildings in the camp, with rats everywhere.

"The doctor comes on a visit twice a week. He is the same doctor who 'treated' prisoners in the camp during the nazi period. A friend of mine with tonsilitis had to stand two yards away from the doctor. The doctor, without even looking in his mouth, shouted: 'You are shamming because you want to get a scarf to wear. Report back to work.'"

(The father of this young prisoner was murdered by the nazis in Boergermoor Concentration Camp, fifteen miles away from where his son is now imprisoned.)

The Peat Bog Soldiers

The famous anti-nazi concentration camp song "The Peat Bog Soldiers" was composed in Boergermoor Concentration Camp, just 15 miles away from Chancellor Adenauer's new concentration camp at Gross Hesepe.

Here is one verse of the song, written in 1933:

"Up and down the guards are pacing,
No one, no one can go through.
Flight would mean a sure death facing,
Guns and barbed wire greet our view."

COMMUNIST BAN TRIAL

Court Bars Defence Evidence

Here is the continuation of the summary of the proceedings before the West German Constitutional Court at Karlsruhe, at which the West German Government is attempting to obtain a ban on the Communist Party (KPD). Summaries of previous proceedings were given in GERMAN REPORT dated December 10th and 24th 1954, and March 4th and 18th 1955.

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March 16th: KPD defence attorney Dr. Kaul protested against attempts to prejudice the trial by outside circles, like that of the Hamburg Public Prosecutor, who had announced that a recent explosion in Hamburg was caused by "bomb-making Communists" and had attempted to link the incident to the Karlsruhe trial, Dr. Kaul stated: "This reminds us of events in the Hitlerite period, the darkest period in German history." The court thereupon interrupted Dr. Kaul, and refused him the right to speak further.

Fritz Rische, member of the Central Board of the KPD, appearing for the defence, sketched the part played by the Party in the struggle for the national unity of Germany, stating: "We do not claim any monopoly for the KPD in this national struggle; in fact we are doing all we can to achieve cooperation with all democratic and patriotic forces. But we do not intend to cooperate in any way with the militarists, monopolists and big landowners."

March 17th: Prosecuting Attorney Dr. Dix claimed that the KPD should be banned under Article 21 of the West German Constitution, which declares as unconstitutional those parties which "infringe the principles of the free democratic basic order". He stated that the KPD was obviously unconstitutional, since it identified itself with the principles of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and the CPSU had revealed its true principles by staging the October Revolution in 1917.

March 18th: Defence attorney Professor Kroeger denied the claim that the KPD could be unconstitutional under Article 21 of the West German Constitution. "Such a judgement would mean that modern jurisprudence had been replaced by medieval witch-hunting and fascist thought-control" he stated.

March 21st: Defence attorney Dr. Kaul presented the court with proof that West German Chancellor Adenauer had been active in the Rhineland Separatist Movement in the years following the First World War, and was thus himself guilty of treason. Prosecuting attorneys immediately began to shout and created such confusion that the court adjourned in disorder.

March 22nd: The presentation of evidence on the aims of Marxism Leninism having been concluded, the court began its hearings on the subject of "The concrete aims of the KPD." For this purpose defence attorneys had introduced the full text of 19 documents defining these aims. The court refused to accept these documents, and demanded that only the "relevant passages" be introduced.

Prosecuting Attorney Dr. Wintrich based his case upon the "Programme for the National Reunification of Germany", issued by the KPD in November 1952. This programme had called for immediate free all-German elections.

March 23rd: Walter Fisch, representing the Central Board of the KPD, told the court that the Programme for the National Reunification of Germany, far from being treasonable, was an appeal for constitutional action to protect the constitution. It was the West German Government which had acted unconstitutionally by pressing ahead with remilitarisation, he stated.

March 24th: Defence attorney Dr. Kaul presented the court with the names of 50 leading members of the West German Government and civil service who occupy at the same time important positions in industry. He also presented a list of the names of 33 members of the West German Foreign Ministry who had occupied similar high positions under Hitler. The aim of this evidence was to show that the Adenauer regime was in fact a "government of monopolists, revenge seekers and militarists" as laid down in the KPD Programme for National Reunification.

Court President Dr. Wintrich requested the defence to present in more detail those points in which it was contended the West German Government had acted in an unconstitutional manner.

March 25th: Court President Dr. Wintrich reversed his decision of the previous day, and decided that it was not admissible for the defence to introduce evidence showing that the West German government had acted unconstitutionally.

New Film Glorifies Nazi Soldiers

The West German film firm "Neue Filmverleih" has produced a new militarist film "So War Der Deutsche Landser" (German Soldiers Were Like That) composed mainly of documentary material from old nazi newsreels.

The film shows Hitler receiving foreign statesmen — "They all came to see Adolf" states the commentary proudly, and gives a detailed account of the nazi invasion of most of the countries of Europe.

Alleged "War crimes" committed by the allies, such as the bombing of Monte Cassino Abbey in Italy are dwelt on at length. There is no indication in the film that German troops committed any war crimes.

"And now as our first contribution toward world disarmament, we'll start rearming you."
("Daily Mirror," London)

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC TAKES DEFENCE MEASURES

The German Democratic Republic had begun to take measures for the protection of the Republic, following the completion of West German ratification of the Paris Agreements, it was officially announced in Berlin on March 25th.

One day earlier, on March 24th, West German President Theodor Heuss had signed the ratification instruments to the Agreements, under which West Germany will get a new Wehrmacht.

The East German Government declaration stressed that following the ratification, German reunification could only be attained by the cancellation of the Paris Agreements.

Here are the main points of this important statement:

"The (West German) Federal Parliament, by ratifying the Paris Agreements, and Federal President Heuss by signing and proclaiming the agreements, have ignored the demand of the German people for unity and peace.

"At the same time the Adenauer Government seeks to awaken the impression that the ratification of the Paris Agreements is favourable to the reunification of Germany, and that negotiations will shortly be held on the solution of the German problem.

"The Government of the German Democratic Republic cannot allow this misleading statement to go unanswered. Such a statement is an attempt to mislead the German people, and to hide from them the sharpening of the situation.

"The German people must realise that the Western Powers, Adenauer and the Federal Parliament, by ratifying the Paris Agreements, are destroying the possibility of negotiations on the peaceful reunification of Germany, and further widen the partitioning of Germany.

"By pressing the Paris Agreements through the Western Powers and Adenauer have proved once again that they reject the reunification of Germany on a democratic and peaceful basis, and that they sacrifice this for the inclusion of West Germany in an aggressive pact system.

"Exactly contrary action has been taken by the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, with their declarations on the ending of the state of war with Germany... and with their proposals for the creation of a wide system of collective security in Europe.

"The Government of the USSR and the Government of the German Democratic Republic have repeatedly declared their readiness to negotiate; they have at the same time announced that the ratification and putting into effect of the Paris Agreements makes negotiations on the reunification of Germany impossible.

"The Government of the German Democratic Republic therefore gives its support to all efforts made by the German people in its fight against the carrying out of the Paris Agreements. The struggle to remove the militarists from their positions in the state and the economy of West Germany, against the construction of a West German mercenary army, and against the burden of armaments, serves the maintenance of peace and the interests of reunification.

"As a result of this, in the new situation which has been created, the Government of the German Democratic Republic has begun to take measures to protect the German Democratic Republic, in accordance with the Declaration of the Moscow Conference of December 2nd 1954...

"The Federal Parliament must bear the full responsibility for everything arising from its decision (to ratify the Paris Agreements).

"The Government of the German Democratic Republic expects from the German people that despite all difficulties they will continue their fight against the Paris Agreements, that they will make their voice heard through increased mass actions, and that they will not rest until the vital questions of the nation have been solved in a democratic and peaceful manner."

(The "Declaration of the Moscow Conference", referred to above, stated in part: "The participants in this Conference announce their decision that in the case of the ratification of the Paris Agreements they will take joint measures in the organisation of their armed forces and command, and also other measures necessary for the strengthening of their defence abilities...")

"Yalta Agreement Cancelled" – Chancellor Adenauer

The Bundesrat, West German Parliamentary Upper House, completed the ratification of the Paris Agreements, providing for a new West German Wehrmacht, on March 18th.

West German Chancellor Adenauer announced on the same evening that the ratification "means the cancellation of the Yalta Agreement.

"The decision on the Paris Agreements means that the spirit of Potsdam and Yalta has been buried" Chancellor Adenauer stated.

The Yalta Agreement, signed by Winston Churchill, Joseph Stalin and Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 11th 1945 stated:

"It is our inflexible purpose to destroy German militarism and Nazism and to ensure that Germany will never again be able to disturb the peace of the world.

"We are determined to disarm and disband all German armed forces; break up for all time the German General Staff that has repeatedly contrived the resurgence of German militarism; remove or destroy all German military equipment; eliminate or control all German industry that could be used for military production; bring all war criminals to just and swift punishment and exact reparation in kind for the destruction wrought by the Germans; wipe out the Nazi Party, Nazi laws, organisations and institutions, remove all Nazi and militarist influences from public office and from the cultural and economic life of the German people; and take in harmony such other measures in Germany as may be necessary to the future peace and safety of the world.

"It is not our purpose to destroy the people of Germany, but only when Nazism and militarism have been extirpated, will there be hope for a decent life for Germans, and a place for them in the comity of nations."

This is the agreement which Chancellor Adenauer now announces has been "cancelled".

BETWEEN CAPITALISM & SOCIALISM

Transition in East Germany

By Professor Fred Oelssner, Member of the German Academy of Sciences

(Important questions dealing with the economy of the German Democratic Republic were dealt with at the Theoretical Conference of the Institute for Economic Science of the German Academy, held in Berlin from March 12th to 14th this year. The main address was delivered by Professor Fred Oelssner, member of the Politbureau of the Socialist Unity Party. On these pages we reproduce parts of his address dealing with the economic forms prevailing at present in the German Democratic Republic.)

When we look at the developments hitherto in the transitional period between capitalism and socialism in the German Democratic Republic we can distinguish two main stages of development.

The first stage extended until 1949/50. In this period the main tasks were those of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Land reform and other changes were carried out, and the state organs of the anti-fascist-democratic order developed into the organs of the workers' and peasants' power. The destruction of imperialism led to the creation of a nationally-owned sector in industry, transport, banking, agriculture and trade. The issue of production decrees for the most important large factories meant the beginning of the planning of the economy. The economic basic law of socialism began to come into effect.

The second stage began in 1949/50. With the formation of the German Democratic Republic the workers' and peasants' power stabilised itself on a people's democratic basis. The fulfillment of the Two Year Plan (1949-1950) strengthened the dominance of the nationally-owned sector in the economy. This made possible the development of longrange planning for the first Five Year Plan.

The success in fulfilling the Five Year Plan has made it possible to strengthen the production alliance between socialist industry and agriculture, and to pursue a socialist path in agriculture with the creation of agricultural production cooperatives.

Successes in industry and agriculture have made it possible to take an important step forward in supplies for the working people—the introduction of the New Course. In this second phase the economic basic law of socialism became effective over a considerably greater sector, and became the dominant law affecting the development of the entire economy of the German Democratic Republic.

Production relations in the German Democratic Republic correspond to the character of this transitional period. At the present time they are marked by the existence of three forms of ownership of means of production, and thus by three economic forms. At present there are in the German Democratic Republic the following three forms:

A. Socialist property of two varieties:

1. General national property, such as state property and communal property, in the form of the nationally-owned sector of industry, agriculture, transport, trade and banking.
2. Cooperative property in the retail cooperatives, the agricultural production cooperatives, peasant trade cooperatives, fishing cooperatives, craftsmen's cooperatives.

These two forms of property constitute the socialist sector of the economy. In industry they are responsible for about 85 per cent of production, and in agriculture about one-third of the cultivated area. Railways, banks, insurance and foreign trade are fully socialised.

It must be noted, however, that the cooperatives themselves have in some cases a transitional character. The agricultural production cooperatives in the German Democratic Republic cannot be compared to the collective farms in the USSR, since the land which they till remains the private property of the various peasant cooperators. As a result, part of the income of these cooperatives is not distributed according to the socialist principle of distribution according to work done, but according to the amount of land brought into the cooperative; it is thus a form of absolute ground rent. However, the agricultural production cooperatives undoubtedly belong to the socialist sector of our economy.

B. Private ownership of the means of production, based on work is to be found in three sectors:

1. The privately-owned farms of small and middle peasants.
2. Craftsmen's undertakings.
3. The small undertakings of private retail traders, which own no means of production, but which own means of circulation, and live from their own work.

These three groups together constitute the sector of small-scale goods economy. This sector is still of considerable size in the German Democratic Republic.

C. Capitalist property, in six fields:

1. Capitalist industrial undertakings.
2. Large craftsmen's undertakings of a capitalist character.
3. The farms of rich peasants.
4. Capitalist undertakings in wholesale and retail trade.
5. Capitalist transport firms (road and water transport).
6. Capitalist cooperatives.

These six groups form the capitalist sector. Their share in our entire economy is still very considerable. It is necessary to explain the phrase "capitalist cooperatives". These include merchants' purchasing cooperatives, craftsmen's supply cooperatives, etc. Many of the smaller of these cooperatives, particularly in agriculture and forestry, have the possibility of developing into socialist cooperatives.

Apart from these three differing forms of ownership of the means of production, we have in the German Democratic Republic very widespread private ownership of housing. The rents of these houses amount to 800 million marks annually.

The three basic forms of ownership of the means of production in the German Democratic Republic are the decisive sign of the present transitional period from capitalism to socialism. These three forms of ownership correspond to the three existent economic forms. These three economic forms represent three different steps in historic development.

The socialist sector, based on community ownership of the means of

production, is the highest stage of development ... The socialist sector completely controls the commanding positions in the economy — large-scale industry, the banks, the railways, the tractor stations and foreign trade. As a result the socialist sector influences the whole of the economy in the German Democratic Republic.

The sector of the small-scale goods economy is the lowest stage of development. Thanks to the existence of the workers' and peasants' power and the socialist sector of economy, there is the possibility of sparing these small producers the painful capitalist path of development.

The capitalist sector of the economy stands between these two other sectors. In this sector there is a contradiction between the production relations and the character of the productive forces. This contradiction is not of decisive importance, however, since:

1. This sector is relatively small.
2. There are no large capitalist factories.
3. The capitalist sector controls no key posts.
4. The socialist sector and state economic planning exert their influence on the capitalist sector.

Despite all these facts, however, it must not be overlooked that the very existence of the capitalist sector and its inherent contradictions can form disturbing factors in the entire economy.

The co-existence of varying economic forms in the transitional period in the German Democratic Republic makes the solution of the economic problems a difficult task. We must not confine ourselves to the study of the socialist sector ... It is our duty to do research on economic problems, taking into account the particular factors presented by the transitional period in the German Democratic Republic, and by the partitioning of Germany.

* * *

Lenin emphasised that the various classes would continue to exist for many years after the conquest of power by the proletariat. But the classes do not remain the same; they change their character during the transitional period, and develop gradually into new classes, the classes of socialist society. We can observe this process at work in the German Democratic Republic.

The working class in the German Democratic Republic is no longer the old proletariat in the classical sense. It is neither propertyless, nor oppressed, and the majority is no longer exploited. The working class has become the leading class in society, the dominant class. The change in the social-economic situation brings a change in the consciousness of the working class. It gets another attitude towards socialist property and to work. Work ceases to be an unpleasant necessity and becomes a question of honour. This is shown by the emulation contests and production pledges in the factories.

The class of working peasants has been freed from the exploitation of finance-capital and the Junkers. The working peasants have changed from an appendix of the bourgeoisie into the reliable allies of the working class. The most progressive section of the working peasants have come together to form agricultural production cooperatives. In a strictly scientific sense the peasant co-operators do not belong any more to the class of working peasants, but form the germ of a new class. This is the new class which will change the whole nature of the working peasants in the course of the transitional period. For this reason it is of extreme importance that the peasant cooperators should maintain the very closest relations with the individual working peasants.

During the period of transition the working class together with the class of working peasants and peasant cooperators form the main classes.

The intelligentsia also changes its character during the transition period. The progressive elements move nearer to the working class and line up closely with the working class. During the transitional period a new intelligentsia develops from the working class and the peasantry, and has firm roots in these two classes.

The bourgeoisie remains in existence as an exploiting class for a considerable time during the transition period. This class is composed of the capitalist entrepreneurs in industry, trade and transport, and of rich peasants. But the bourgeoisie is also changing in character. The domination of the financial oligarchy has ended, the monopoly capitalists have disappeared, and the Junkers have disappeared. What remain are small and middle capitalists, who participate in the general up-swing in the economy so long as the capitalist sector of the economy remains in existence.

2000 PROTESTANT PASTORS SAY "NO" TO WEHRMACHT

"About 2000 of the 8500 Protestant pastors in West Germany have so far protested against West German rearmament" the West German weekly newsmagazine "Spiegel" reported on March 16th.

Here are some examples:

On November 3rd 1954, 110 pastors of the Rhine Brotherhood issued the 'Leverkusen Declaration' stating: 'Under the present circumstances we could not obey a summons to military service'. To date a total of 1379 pastors and other church figures have signed this declaration.

On November 8th 1954 56 pastors in Dortmund declared that they were convinced 'that rearmament under the present circumstances is not the correct method of achieving reunification and peace'.

On December 8th 1954, 27 leading Evangelical theologists meeting in Dusseldorf warned against the introduction of rearmament before the 'political, legal and moral conditions for taking such a step have been clarified'.

On December 15th 1954, 17 leading Evangelical church leaders in Frankfurt warned of the 'dangerous illusion' that 'the east will accept German remilitarisation without a serious reaction'. They added that it was 'cynical corruption' to 'make the youth ready for military service by dangling before them unrealistic ideals and impossible war aims'.

On January 15th 1955 twelve pastors in Bremen announced that they were convinced it was an illusion to believe 'that the reunification of our people in peace and liberty could be obtained by means of rearmament'.

On February 5th 1955, 280 pastors of the Evangelical Church in Hesse and Nassau warned against 'arming a people, of which not a small number do not have the freedom of a good conscience'."

West German Miners Vote for Strike

The overwhelming majority of all West German miners voted for strike action to enforce their wage claims, in a strike vote taken by the unions in all pits on March 22nd.

Over 93 percent of the votes cast by union members favoured strike action for a 12 percent wage increase made necessary by steadily rising prices.

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

"Is jazz banned in East Germany?" is one of the questions which turns up again and again in our mail-bag. The answer to this question is quite simple. If you live somewhere where you can hear the radio transmissions from the German Democratic Republic (the Deutschlandsender on long waves is particularly easy to hear in Britain), just tune in any time during the evening, and you are very likely to hear a programme of dance music including jazz.

It may not be very good jazz — I am no judge — but it is played and listened to. And another proof of the fact that nobody here wants to ban jazz is given in the latest issue of "Neues Leben", an illustrated monthly magazine published by the Central Board of the Free German Youth.

New Orleans

The March number of this magazine published a full page picture of Louis Armstrong, and another full page picture of Sidney Bechet, grand old man of New Orleans jazz who is now living and working in Paris. The pictures were accompanied by an article describing the music made by these two great jazz musicians in glowing terms, and asking whether it would not be possible to arrange a tour through East Germany for Bechet and other leading jazz musicians.

Incidentally, the magazine "Neues Leben" provides an answer to other readers in various parts of the world who have asked whether it is not true that all the papers and magazines in East Germany are filled exclusively with politics.

Now I have often had hard things to say about the daily newspapers in East Germany — in my personal opinion they are almost all badly written, badly edited, and rather boring — but the same cannot be said of many of the weeklies and monthlies.

Let us take as an example this March issue of "Neues Leben". I don't think it is the best of the magazines put out here, but I happen to have it on my desk. It is about the same size as the British "Lilliput" magazine. Its cover is decorated with a four-colour photo of a good-looking girl on a horse.

The inside cover has a full-page photo of lovers kissing in a field. The picture editor, selecting this as a nice seasonal "springy" picture, was not really careful enough, because the grass in the meadow is very long and dry, and not at all springlike.

The contents include three pages of pictures from the Italian film "Tomorrow it will be Too Late", starring Vittorio di Sica; an adventure story; a short story about a race horse, several poems; an account of a visit to West Germany entitled "Spring Journey through Bavaria", and a number of articles on travel, inventions and so on.

Two pages are devoted to the "well-dressed man", with tips on what shirt and what tie looks best with what colour of suit. These pages also give a series of eight simple drawings showing how to tie a Windsor knot in your tie. I have just been trying it out unsuccessfully sitting at the typewriter; I only managed to get myself tied in knots.

Then there are fashions for women — practical ones for use by tram conductors and drivers, and smart blouses and skirts for leisure hours. The magazine concludes with two pages of crossword and other puzzles.

"What, no politics?", I can hear readers asking. There are "politics" too of course, in the articles, but not only politics. One of the stories is a highly political story about the Paris Commune of 1871, but it is a good story too.

Perhaps the most "political" thing in the whole issue is a three page picture story of a group of five young building workers. They are shown at work on a building site, at play (one of them is a record-breaking sprinter), and finally their prospects are shown. Two of them will be going to the Humboldt University in East Berlin this year to study as engineers, and a third will be going to technical high school in the autumn.

And the young people who read and enjoy this magazine know that they have similar prospects, and no fear of unemployment, since there is full employment in the German Democratic Republic, and ample opportunities for further study for anyone who wants to make the effort.

P. S. I have described the East German daily newspapers above as boring. They are. But there is no war propaganda, and no nationalist hate propaganda in them, and that makes up for a lot.

Incidentally I have just been looking through a catalogue of all the newspapers and magazines issued in the German Democratic Republic, and there is a very impressive variety. There are some 300 periodicals in the catalogue ranging from the "Astronomic News" through the "Rabbit Breeder" tu film and fashion magazines.

Nearly all these magazines are in German, of course. A copy of the catalogue will be sent free to anyone interested. Just write direct to:

Deutscher Buch-Export und Import
Leninstrasse 16
Leipzig C 1
German Democratic Republic.

That, by the way, is the address to which all enquiries about books and periodicals published in the German Democratic Republic should be addressed.

News Story

A news story filed by the American "Associated Press" from Detroit USA may be worth quoting here:

"A former German army officer whose intelligence agents brought him secret plans from the Detroit arsenal during World War Two is now an engineer at the arsenal working on new secret tank designs."

"Richard A. Wabnitz has brought his intimate knowledge of tanks, particularly the Russian varieties, to the West after 14 years as a military engineer in his native Germany. Wabnitz, 43, is an experienced intelligence officer, engineering instructor and counter-espionage expert . . ."

"Wabnitz says one of his last wartime jobs was trying to keep German war production alive under Allied bombing attacks... At one time, agents brought him plans of an American gun-stabilizing device. Later he learned the plans were only six months off the drawing boards of the Detroit arsenal."

Unfortunately I cannot give the exact source for this revealing story, since the American reader who sent me the newspaper cutting neglected to give the name of the newspaper and the date. Clippings like this are very much appreciated, but please give the full source when you send them in.

Edited and published fortnightly by John Peet. Democratic German Report, Friedrichstrasse 167/III Berlin W 8. Telephone 22 29 68. Printed in Germany by (36). Veröffentlicht unter Lizenz-Nr. 694 beim Presseamt des Ministerpräsidenten der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik